



Press Release

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Force protection teams begin daily patrol at Camp Humphreys

By Steve Davis
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CAMP HUMPHREYS, REPUBLIC OF KOREA – Force protection teams now patrol Camp Humphreys in search of suspicious or illegal activities.

A force protection team patrols the base randomly each day with a very specific mission: to conduct building inspections, verify identification cards, inspect vehicles, inspect personnel bags and packages and verify personnel needing escort for the purpose of enforcing force protection measures, according to Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery Thomas, security and force protection NCO for the Area III Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobility and Security.

The force protection team carries a memorandum signed by the installation commander authorizing them to carry out this mission. Thomas said people failing to cooperate with the force protection patrol will be referred to the military police.

There are two teams that work one day on and one day off. Each team is made up of two employees from DHE Security, the security contractor that provides gate guards and roving patrols on Camp Humphreys. The force protection patrol, however, is different. Its activities are intentionally designed to be random.

“The team on duty never knows where it will be going that day,” said Thomas. “It is told only before its shift begins.”

DHE Security supervisor Kim Hong-seok said a list of duties is given to the force protection patrol at its morning briefing. Kim personally issues the team’s daily matrix of times, locations and duties prepared by Thomas.

“Their activities are always different so that a pattern cannot be detected,” said Kim. “This is a more aggressive way to seek out and stop potential terrorists.”

Because force protection patrol team members often interact with Soldiers, civilians and family members, they were selected for their interpersonal communication skills, as well as their appearance and attitude.

Ko Sung-pong, who has worked with DHE Security for nearly four years, was on a mobile patrol team before being selected for the force protection mission. He said his role now is much different.

“We have a lot more contact with people and we are required to search vehicles, handbags and other items,” he said. “We also go to construction sites and into buildings looking for suspicious activities.”

Force protection patrol members received special training about how to search people, packages and vehicles. They have also received training on portable handheld devices that can detect explosives and narcotics.

Force protection team member Park Myong-sun worked at the Camp Humphreys main gate checking ID cards for nearly three years before being selected for the newly formed patrol. She said some people are surprised when she asks to search their bags.

“At first, people didn’t understand why suddenly we had begun searching vehicles and bags,” she said. “Most people are cooperative, however.”

Ko and Park said they had found only a few violations since the force protection patrol measures began in mid-May.

“We have found one escort violation, several expired privately-owned vehicle decals and instances where temporary vehicle passes are not visible,” said Park.

Amy K. Glavey, who works at the post exchange, said she didn’t mind when Ko and Park asked to search her handbag as she passed through the Camp Humphreys walk-through gate.

“It’s OK with me,” she said. “I don’t mind at all. They are helping to protect the base.”

Thomas said the force protection patrol helps maintain a high level of base security.

“A high state of security awareness is required these days,” he said. “This patrol is an additional resource that we use to detect or deter activities that may endanger the force.”